Live Stock and Dairy

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Inquiries of Progressive Farmer readers cheerfully answered.

Keep Your Best Stock.

Many farmers are in the habit of selling their best animals, as they will bring the highest price. A greater mistake cannot be made. A difference of ten or even twenty-five per cent in the price of a single animal is a small affair as compared with this difference in a whole herd. By keeping the very best to propagate from, the whole may be made of equal excellence, and in the course of a few years numerous animals might be produced having the excellent properties that now distinguish some few of the best.

What would you say of a farmer who has several highly valuable varieties of potatoes and other kinds that are inferior, and for the sake of ten cents extra per bushel he sells for consumption all his best varieties, and plants those that are inferior, when in consequence of this imprudent measure, his next crop will fall short twenty-five per cent. Everyone will condemn this course, and few, if any, are so wanting in discretion as to pursue it. Yet many take a similar course in selling their best animals and propagating from the poor. Not only is this true for animals for breeding purposes, but for work as well. Who does not know in his own experience of farmers who sell their best work horses and keep the poorer. Well, the consequence is the poorer one costs a great deal more to keep each year and does less work, and in the end is the most expensive animal. The policy should have been to keep the better one and to have sold the inferior. This is true in every case.

And doubly so, we believe, when the farmer has animals for breeding purposes. There is a vast difference in our cattle in sections where much attention has been given to improvements by selecting the best, when contrasted with those where little or no attention has been paid to the subject, and as a matter of course, the best have been sold, or eaten up, because they were the fattest.

Every man that raises stock has it in his power to make improvements, and he should avail himself of all the adventages around him to turn his power to the benefit of himself and posterity. —Dr. C. W. Burkett, in Agricultural Education.

Sweet Clover and Italian Bees.

Editors Progressive Farmer:

Will you allow us just space enough in the best agricultural paper in the South to correct a mistake which the printer made in setting up my article in answer to the question asked some time ago by G. H., of Wayne County, as to why he found no honey in his hive, and a mistake of which Mr. Womble has availed himself in order to deliver the old man a lecture. In the article I wrote I said as plainly as it could be written, "No one should go into bee-keeping with the expectation of making anything out of it unless he intends to post himself in 'apiculture' and give to bees the required attention"—and I say so yet. The printer made me say "agriculture;" but when I saw it, I did not hasten to have the correction made, believing that any well-read apiculturist could see that the analogy between agriculture and apiculture was so wide apart that the typographical error would be detected, and more so by a bee-keeping printer.

We thank Mr. Womble very kindly for his invitation to come over and see his sweet clover crop, and his kind offer to teach us how to cultivate it. We abandoned it twenty years ago—although we know it to be a fine plant for producing honey, but Mr. Womble, as a learned writer on bees and honey plants, ought to have discovered by this time that annual clover blooms yield honey as long in the season as the red blooms continue to grow, and then it is a splendid forage plant. Mr. Womble says that there are hundreds of successful bee-keepers who do not agree with our views as to the value of the sweet clover. We admit there are some few, and we add, that every single one of those who are blowing the value of the plant have the seed for sale. It has been tried here by several parties. There is not a more advanced apiarian in the State than Mr. Sam King, in Swift Creek Township; he and others tried it with the same results we experienced. Let us hear from you, Sam. It grows rank on strong land, but the planter must wait two years from planting before he sees a bloom. In that length of time we harvest two crops of annual clover, eight to ten tons to the acre of the best of forage, besides the two crops of honey it produced. The sweet clover does not yield anything like the amount of honey some of its advocates claim for it, and when the plant matures it is as coarse and hard as dry heath aster (October weed).

As to the different races of bees, there are several, all having their pecularities and claims for public favor; but none have yet displaced the Italians, although we have in America quite a lot of amateurs who are engaged in constant efforts to bring out something new, most of whom value color more than any other quality. But after all tests the Italians and Carniolians, with their crosses, have proven themselves to be the business bees, and that is what the practical bee-man wants. Mr. Womble denies our position that the Italian race is most given to "after swarming," as that is not his experience. May not his efforts to raise grafted queens by dividing up his colonies into small neuclei have something to do with non-swarming and thus prevent after-swarming?

D. P. MEACHAM.

Wake Co., N. C.

A stray pig came along a lane and a farmer caught it and put it in a pen in his barn-yard. It died within a few days, and in ten days thereafter other hogs on the farm were dying. Their owner thoughtlessly moved the well hogs to another pasture, near the herds of others, and in less than six weeks $1,000 worth of hogs died from the contagion brought into the country by that stray pig. Farmers cannot be too careful in regard to such matters, and instead of fearing a visit from the State Veterinarian, they should in all cases of suspected contagious disease, promptly inform him and lend him all assistance within their power. It is to the interest of every farmer to have contagious diseases in animals stamped out before they get beyond control.—Exchange.

Medical Equipment for Stock.

Much valuable stock is lost because farmers do not have on hand any instruments or medicines to use in case of emergency. I give below a list of instruments and medicines that ought to be kept on every farm.

1. A surgical knife. 2. A pair of scissors that can be taken apart. 3. A pair of artery forceps. 4. Two good needles and some heavy silk thread. 5. A trochar and canula for cases of bloat. 6. A balling iron to hold animal's mouth open to examine the teeth, etc. 7. An emasculator, for castrating purposes.

In medicines: 1. Saltpetre, to be used in all cases of fever. 2. Turpentine, to be used in wounds as a preventive of lockjaw. Is good for colic and worms and will draw an abscess to a head. 3. Borax, used for sore mouths and diarrhoea. A weak solution is used for treating the eye. 4. Carbolic acid. 5. Laudanum, used to allay pain. One-half to two ounces is a dose for a horse. 6. Baking soda, used in flatulent colic. A wash of soda and water will cure itch of mane and tail. 7. Copperas, used as a tonic. —S. J. Taylor, Toto, Ind.

THE HAND SEPARATOR.

If You Have Six or More Cows, You are Losing Money if You are Without One.

Will it pay to purchase a hand separator on a farm where six or more cows are kept? This is a question that repeatedly crops up. The separator has now been so long on the market that its useful qualities are well established. It is generally known that a good machine will skim down to .1 of 1 per cent of fat; that it will extract the cream from the milk while it is still warm; that it will thoroughly aerate the milk and remove from it the cowy odor, which is not only disagreeable to the taste, but which, if retained, tends to develop undesirable ferments and hastens the souring of the milk. Then the separator also removes all the dirt particles from the milk, hairs, and a fair per cent of the bacteria which get into the milk from one source and another, so that in a certain sense it acts as a preservative of the milk. The separator also enables the skim milk to be fed warm and fresh, a matter of the greatest importance where calves are to be raised on the farm. Fresh, warm milk is not so important for hogs which seem to do as well apparently on sour milk as on the freshly separated article fed warm. But when fed warm and sweet there is much less danger of undesirable forms of bacteria gaining a foothold in the stable or the hog barn, and so cholera and other dread disease are not so likely to develop as where filthy slop barrels are permitted.

The hand separator has many peculiar advantages in the South. It is a custom on many farms where a few cows are kept to churn all the milk every day. This can be avoided by the use of the separator, as the bulk of the milk can be reduced so much that in some sections ice can be utilized to preserve the cream at a profit, whereas, it could not be used with the whole milk. Again, the cream can often be preserved in cold water from a spring, whereas a number of large cans of milk could not be accommodated. In a warm climate milk ferments very quickly unless promptly cooled and aerated, and the preservation of the quality of the milk is a matter of the gravest importance where it is to be placed on the market as human food. Pasteurization has frequently been tested to preserve it, but it has been found in many instances that sanitary surroundings and the immediate aeration and separation of the milk and cream will preserve it almost as long as pasteurizing, and the operation of separation is much simpler than that of pasteurization, and does not affect the taste or composition of the milk in the slightest degree. Some may imagine that if the milk is passed through a separator the milk and cream will not readily mix again. Such is not the case, however, if the two are run directly into one vessel and thoroughly stirred before bottling. Climatic conditions, economy in handling the product, the excellence of the skim milk on farms where butter-making is practiced, all commend the use of the separator even on the small dairy farm.

The amount of money required for the purchase of a first-class separator to handle the milk from a half dozen or more cows is very small in comparison with the benefits derived. Where the whole milk is churned the separator will offset the labor involved in handling so great a volume, which will only yield a few pounds of butter at best. Then, if an attempt is made to skim the milk by hand through deep setting, the per cent of fat lost in a year will amount to more than the purchase price of a separator. It has been definitely shown in many instances that the hand separator will more than pay for itself the first year of its use by reason of the fat saved. It is not uncommon where shallow setting is practiced for 1 to 2 per cent of the fat to be lost; where deep setting is practiced from ½ to 1 per cent is lost. With a separator properly run this need not amount to more than .01 of 1 per cent, or practically nothing. The farmer who has a small herd of cows need not hesitate to purchase a hand separator. He will find it an invaluable addition to his dairy equipment and one of the most economical investments he ever made.—Southern Agriculturist.